

2019 Current Fiscal Year Report: Committee of Scientific Advisors on Marine Mammals

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1. Department or Agency		2. Fiscal Year	
Marine Mammal Commission		2019	
3. Committee or Subcommittee		3b. GSA Committee No.	
Committee of Scientific Advisors on Marine Mammals		1059	
4. Is this New During Fiscal Year?	5. Current Charter	6. Expected Renewal Date	7. Expected Term Date
No	04/29/2019	04/29/2021	
8a. Was Terminated During Fiscal Year?	8b. Specific Termination Authority	8c. Actual Term Date	
No			
9. Agency Recommendation for Next Fiscal Year	10a. Legislation Req to Terminate?	10b. Legislation Pending?	
Continue		Not Applicable	
11. Establishment Authority Statutory (Congress Created)			
12. Specific Establishment Authority	13. Effective Date	14. Committee Type	14c. Presidential?
16 U.S.C. 1403	12/21/1972	Continuing	No
15. Description of Committee Scientific Technical Program Advisory Board			
16a. Total Number of Reports	No Reports for this Fiscal Year		
17a. Open Meetings and Dates	17b. Closed Meetings and Dates	17c. Partially Closed Meetings and Dates	17d. Total Meetings and Dates
No Meetings			

	Current FY	Next FY
18a(1). Personnel Pmts to Non-Federal Members	\$0.00	\$0.00
18a(2). Personnel Pmts to Federal Members	\$0.00	\$0.00
18a(3). Personnel Pmts to Federal Staff	\$0.00	\$0.00
18a(4). Personnel Pmts to Non-Member Consultants	\$0.00	\$0.00
18b(1). Travel and Per Diem to Non-Federal Members	\$0.00	\$0.00
18b(2). Travel and Per Diem to Federal Members	\$0.00	\$0.00
18b(3). Travel and Per Diem to Federal Staff	\$0.00	\$0.00
18b(4). Travel and Per Diem to Non-member Consultants	\$0.00	\$0.00
18c. Other(rents,user charges, graphics, printing, mail, etc.)	\$0.00	\$0.00
18d. Total	\$0.00	\$0.00

19. Federal Staff Support Years (FTE)

0.00 0.00

20a. How does the Committee accomplish its purpose?

Through annual meetings and frequent exchanges of information with the Commissioners and staff, the members of the Committee of Scientific Advisors keep abreast of current marine mammal issues, review pertinent documents, and assist in the formulation of Commission recommendations. During Fiscal Year 2018, the Marine Mammal Commission's Committee of Scientific Advisors continued to provide the Commission with the expert scientific advice necessary for making 127 formal recommendations to other agencies concerning Federal, State, and international actions affecting the conservation of marine mammals and their habitats. Specific matters upon which the Committee provided essential scientific review and advice to the Commission during Fiscal Year 2018 included actions needed to reduce threats to marine mammal species listed under the Endangered Species Act, including the vaquita, Cook Inlet beluga whale, North Atlantic right whale, blue whale, southern resident killer whale, and polar bear. The Committee also reviewed proposals to revise regulations governing the listing of species under the Endangered Species Act. In addition, the Committee helped formulate agency positions on steps needed to reduce interactions between marine mammals and fisheries activities and to ensure that other activities, such as military training and sonar operations, offshore oil and gas exploration and production, wind energy projects, geophysical research, and coastal construction projects, do not adversely affect marine mammal populations. Other key issues on which the Committee provided advice included a review of national marine sanctuary designations, proposed stock assessment revisions, aboriginal subsistence whaling, including a proposal from the Makah Tribe to hunt gray whales, subsistence harvests of northern fur seals, restoration projects and other follow-up to the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, conflicts between growing marine mammal populations and human activities. During Fiscal Year 2018 the Committee reviewed a wide variety of documents prepared by other agencies pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. The Committee also reviewed 52 requests for authorizations to take marine mammals incidental to various activities other than commercial fishing. During Fiscal Year 2018, the Committee reviewed and provided detailed comments and recommendations on 48 permit applications and requests for permit amendments to take or import marine mammals for purposes of scientific research, public display, photography and/or species enhancement. The Committee also reviewed and provided advice on numerous scientific research proposals and preproposals, as well as on reports submitted by Commission contractors as part of the Commission's research and studies program.

20b. How does the Committee balance its membership?

The members of the Committee of Scientific Advisors on Marine Mammals are selected

by the Chairman of the Commission, in consultation with the other Commissioners. Consistent with the provisions of the Marine Mammal Protection Act, the names of nominees are submitted to the Chairman of the Council on Environmental Quality, the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, the Director of the National Science Foundation, and the Chairman of the National Academy of Sciences for approval. This helps to ensure a high level of expertise in members is maintained with respect to scientific disciplines, marine mammal species, and geographic areas of particular importance to the Commission's responsibilities. For example, sources of scientific expertise in marine mammal veterinary medicine, population dynamics, population assessment, biometrics, acoustics, and behavior are needed to provide advice on various matters before the Commission. The Commission also requires a high level of knowledge concerning the biology and ecology of certain marine mammal species, such as the West Indian manatee, right whales and other species of large whales, the vaquita, sea otters, the Cook Inlet stock of beluga whales, the polar bear, and the Hawaiian monk seal. These marine mammal species require special attention by the Commission because of their small population levels and/or threats they face. In addition, Committee members are selected to provide broad familiarity with marine mammal species and issues from a range of geographic regions, including Alaska and other polar regions, the Pacific coast of the United States, Florida, and Hawaii, where Commission responsibilities are especially great. The Commission periodically solicits nominations of prospective Committee members from the public via a Federal Register announcement. Those nominations will be considered as appointments to the committee are made.

20c. How frequent and relevant are the Committee Meetings?

The Committee generally meets annually and at other times as necessary. The meetings provide the Committee with the opportunity to exchange views and information and to focus its attention on issues of particular importance or urgency. During Fiscal Year 2018, the Commission and Committee met in Seattle, Washington, to review issues related primarily to the conservation of marine mammals along the West Coast of the United States.

20d. Why can't the advice or information this committee provides be obtained elsewhere?

No other body, either within or outside the government, has the breadth of knowledge or expertise that the Committee possesses with respect to marine mammals. Having a ready source of expertise available to the Commission is essential for scientifically sound and timely decisions to be made with respect to research and management questions before the Commission. If the Committee were not available to the Commission, contracts to obtain the expert knowledge and advice would be required on a case-by-case basis,

which would be more time-consuming, more costly, and more administratively burdensome.

20e. Why is it necessary to close and/or partially closed committee meetings?

N/A

21. Remarks

None

Designated Federal Officer

Michael L. Gosliner General Counsel

Committee Members	Start	End	Occupation	Member Designation
Baird, Robin	08/29/2011	09/30/2019	Cascadia Research Collective	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Baker, Jason	01/14/2013	09/30/2019	Hawaiian Monk Seal Population Assessment Program, National Marine Fisheries Service	Regular Government Employee (RGE) Member
Moore, Sue	04/25/2005	09/30/2019	Principal Oceanographer, Marine Mammal Bioacoustics, University of Washington Applied Physics & Ecology Laboratory	Regular Government Employee (RGE) Member
Reeves, Randall	11/14/2005	09/30/2019	Okapi Wildlife Associates	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Rosel, Patricia	02/15/2011	09/30/2019	National Marine Fisheries Service	Regular Government Employee (RGE) Member
Strindberg, Samantha	04/30/2017	09/30/2019	Wildlife Conservation Society	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Suydam, Robert	02/17/2008	09/30/2019	North Slope Borough Department of Wildlife Management	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Thode, Aaron	03/21/2016	09/30/2019	Scripps Institution of Oceanography, University of California, San Diego	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Wells, Randall	05/17/2015	09/30/2019	Mote Marine Laboratory	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member

Number of Committee Members Listed: 9

Narrative Description

The Marine Mammal Protection Act requires the Commission to consult with the Committee of Scientific Advisors on Marine Mammals on all studies and recommendations it makes, on research programs conducted or proposed by the Commission, and on all applications for scientific research permits under the Act. The advice that the Commission receives from the Committee is critical to meeting the statutory obligations of the Commission as it formulates recommendations to other agencies on matters concerning marine mammal conservation and as it establishes

priorities for its own research program.

What are the most significant program outcomes associated with this committee?

Checked if Applies

Improvements to health or safety	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Trust in government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Major policy changes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Advance in scientific research	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Effective grant making	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Improved service delivery	<input type="checkbox"/>
Increased customer satisfaction	<input type="checkbox"/>
Implementation of laws or regulatory requirements	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

Outcome Comments

NA

What are the cost savings associated with this committee?

Checked if Applies

None	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unable to Determine	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Under \$100,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
\$100,000 - \$500,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
\$500,001 - \$1,000,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
\$1,000,001 - \$5,000,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
\$5,000,001 - \$10,000,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
Over \$10,000,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cost Savings Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

Cost Savings Comments

NA

What is the approximate Number of recommendations produced by this committee for the life of the committee?

127

Number of Recommendations Comments

This is the number of Commission recommendations reviewed by the Committee in Fiscal Year 2018. We do not maintain a total going back to the Committee's creation in the

1970s.

What is the approximate Percentage of these recommendations that have been or will be Fully implemented by the agency?

100%

% of Recommendations Fully Implemented Comments

NA

What is the approximate Percentage of these recommendations that have been or will be Partially implemented by the agency?

0%

% of Recommendations Partially Implemented Comments

NA

Does the agency provide the committee with feedback regarding actions taken to implement recommendations or advice offered?

Yes ☒ No ☐ Not Applicable ☐

Agency Feedback Comments

Committee members are provided copies of Commission recommendations that result from consultation with the Committee and a comprehensive list of agency recommendations is provided on the Commission web site.

What other actions has the agency taken as a result of the committee's advice or recommendation?

Checked if Applies

Reorganized Priorities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Reallocated resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Issued new regulation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Proposed legislation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Approved grants or other payments	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

Action Comments

NA

Is the Committee engaged in the review of applications for grants?

Yes

What is the estimated Number of grants reviewed for approval 27

What is the estimated Number of grants recommended for approval 5

What is the estimated Dollar Value of grants recommended for approval \$221,901

Grant Review Comments

Not Applicable

How is access provided to the information for the Committee's documentation?

Checked if Applies

Contact DFO ☒

Online Agency Web Site ☒

Online Committee Web Site ☐

Online GSA FACA Web Site ☐

Publications ☒

Other ☐

Access Comments

N/A